



TIG

Brief

THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE AIR FORCE

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on our cover

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This issue focuses on the unique command the Air Force has in United States Air Forces in Europe. Gen. Michael Ryan, USAFE commander, discusses readiness, engagement and quality of life as USAFE's mission essential tasks. While USAFE is a smaller command than it has ever been, its mission is also more far-reaching than it has ever been in history. He also discusses the importance of multinational partnership for peace exercises as well as military to military initiatives.

The signature article is complimented by numerous articles that focus on USAFE's unique mission. There is an exceptional article on the secret to passing nuclear surety inspections. This is straight from the USAFE Inspector General's office

and a must read for any unit facing an inspection this year. How has USAFE improved its facilities? You can discover the USAFE "fix" on antiquated facilities. Also featured is an article that shows the practical application of quality in a medical setting which makes for good reading no matter what career you've chosen. Fast payback capital investment program is a worthwhile program in today's shrinking defense dollars and we showcase how USAFE implements the program. In dealing with foreign nations, the question of environmental compliance is of utmost importance for all USAFE units. The article we have featured addresses the environmental concerns USAFE-specific bases have but also those areas which apply to all Air Force bases.

In addition to the USAFE articles, we also highlight our regular departments: the inspector's section, legally speaking, medical issues, the auditor's files, and the investigator's dossiers. Let us know what you think of these regular departments and the rest of the magazine. Please see our back cover on how you can respond to our biannual survey.


ANGELA L. HICKS
Captain, USAF



USAFE MEETING THE CHALLENGE

by Gen. Michael E. Ryan

From the Balkans to Africa, the United States Air Forces in Europe, area of responsibility is rife with examples of conflict and instability. As the air component of United States European Command, USAFE trains, equips, and sustains the forces necessary to rapidly deploy air and space power for contingency situations. Regardless of our tasking, whether delivering humanitarian aid, evacuating noncombatants from danger zones, or delivering lethal ordnance with surgical accuracy, USAFE must maintain its edge to ensure support of America's interests and partnership with our NATO allies in the 21st Century. Integral to tomorrow's success is our ability to focus today on the mission-essential tasks of **readiness, engagement, and quality of life.**

Readiness

Readiness can only be guaranteed through our proactive efforts to equip and train our forces. Our

investment in this area provides our forces with that critical edge required for success. Today's USAFE, although leaner than at any time in the past 45 years, is required to deploy further and faster and perform with greater precision than ever before. Our airmen can only accomplish this feat if they are afforded quality equipment and realistic sustained training. This means training which mirrors the tasks our forces will experience during real-world operations. In Europe, that training is achieved not only from home bases but requires deployments to ranges throughout the area of responsibility.

Real-world contingencies are a fact of day-to-day life in USAFE. Air operations in both Northern Iraq and Bosnia have literally been ongoing for years. Rotations to these contingencies require the most diligent training of the force. While those sustained efforts have raised the operations tempo in the theater to its highest levels in memory, we have been able—with the great help of the other combat air forces and our Reserve and Guard components—to hold the tempo at manageable levels. Our mobility forces

have been equally challenged in sustaining these contingencies and responding to humanitarian crises in Europe and Africa. Our plate is full and our readiness challenge is to execute our ongoing missions to the highest standard while preparing our forces for the inevitable next contingency. That competence, preparation, and execution is why we have forward-stationed forces in Europe—in touch on a day-to-day basis with the realities of evolving crises; involved face-to-face with our unified command, our sister services, and our allies; and expert in the appropriate application of air and space forces.

It is not enough to have ready forces. We must also have the leadership and the command and control structures to execute the wide variety of operations the theater demands. In USAFE, our two numbered Air Forces are focused on that need. They are the key leadership for execution of our contingency missions—as joint force commanders, joint force air component commanders, or air component commanders. Third Air Force, headquartered in the United Kingdom, is primarily responsible

for operations other than war in northern Europe but, more importantly, in the volatile areas of Africa. Sixteenth Air Force, headquartered in Italy, is primarily focused on combat operations in the volatile region surrounding the Mediterranean. Their staffs are engaged daily on events in their areas of responsibility and trained, equipped, and prepared to forward deploy to provide air and space leadership, planning, and control to joint task forces. They are augmented by the deployable USAFE Air Operations Center which is equipped with the command and control equipment and tools to deploy in a modular way to meet the air necessities of European and African contingency operations.

We train and exercise these commands in joint operations at the joint training center at Patch Barracks in Stuttgart, Germany and at the Warrior Preparations Center near Ramstein Air Base, Germany to rapidly execute the wide variety of missions in this theater. Since the Gulf War, we have had about 30 crises to which USAFE has had to respond. Readiness is not a watchword in Europe, it is an indispensable necessity for our forward stationed air forces.

Engagement

In addition to honing the skills and possessing the tools of war, USAFE must stay actively engaged with our allies and those central and eastern European nations seeking greater ties to the West. **Engagement** includes a broad range of activities such as demonstrating commitment, promoting democratic ideals, exchanging ideas, and enhancing regional stability. Through our aggressive involvement in programs like Partnership for Peace and military to military exchanges, we share more than

mere knowledge; we share good will. We show the world that America is committed to building bridges instead of walls.


USEUCOM's military to military initiatives and NATO's Partnership for Peace were developed to foster key relationships with the nations of central Europe and the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union. USAFE is actively engaged in support of the military to military contact program. USAFE personnel have participated in traveling contact teams, providing information in the contact countries through briefings, lectures, and discussions. Familiarization tours bring the participating country's military members to visit USAFE units and facilities to observe daily operations. Unit exchanges have also been arranged, pairing USAFE wings with "sister" units in specific contact countries. USAFE completed over 400 events under the military to military contact program in fiscal year 1996, with a similar aggressive schedule planned for fiscal year 1997. While units based in the United States can and have contributed to this program, forward-based units are key to carrying it out.

Another avenue of engagement where USAFE has seen increased activity is its involvement in multinational Partnership for Peace exercises. Exercises like Cooperative Chance, where nine NATO member nations joined with nine non-NATO nations to enhance military interoperability, develop a common understanding of peacekeeping operations, and, most importantly, foster key relationships, were recently held in Hungary. Providing these nations with a better understanding of the benefits of professional militaries in democratic nations builds understanding and ultimately

increases regional and global security. Engagement facilitates that security best achieved by forward-stationed forces, such as USAFE, are in position to forge close and enduring relationships.

Quality of Life

To successfully accomplish the challenges before them, the men and women of USAFE must stay focused on their mission. At their home station, they deserve to have a **quality of life** commensurate with that of the nation they have sworn to defend. When deployed, they need to know that their families are well cared for and have the best support our Air Force can provide. Quality of life for our forces and families is a direct contributor to readiness. It allows better focus on the mission and helps retain the quality people needed to serve the nation. We in USAFE are committed to the investment in and improvement of the quality of life programs where our forces live, work, and play. For the past 55 years, USAFE has been a force for stability in Europe. From the Berlin Airlift through the Cold War to our current hot peace in Iraq, Bosnia, and Africa, the men and women of USAFE have provided a respected forward presence and responsive air power. Our nation's commitment to this region of the world is evidenced by the quality of forces in forward stations in Europe. For USAFE, that means unwavering support for their vital readiness, their meaningful engagement, and their quality of life. With that, our Air Force men and women in Europe will successfully meet the challenges of today and tomorrow. ♦


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Nuclear Surety

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“... the other team members must feel confident that each cog is pulling its weight toward common objectives.”

Nuclear weapons are an important piece of our national strategy. The United States Air Forces in Europe's Inspector General evaluates how well units within the command maintain nuclear assets, using the process of the nuclear surety inspection.

The nuclear surety inspection looks at various functions within the wing. The primary focus is on how well a unit performs critical tasks such as technical operations, security, loading and mating, aircrew acceptances, and command and control procedures. Other support areas like the lightning protection systems on storage and maintenance facilities, emergency response exercises, and two-person control material procedures are equally important. These critical processes contribute to the overall end result of bombs on target which takes teamwork, planning, and preparation. The following provides USAFE Inspector General's perspective on the keys to successful nuclear surety inspections.

Organizations successful in their nuclear surety inspections have melded various talents into a team, each team being

Inspection

responsible for a particular area. For example, during technical operations, each member of the maintenance or load team is responsible for accomplishing his actions in concert with the rest of the team, perhaps best demonstrated in special assignment airlift missions. Security, maintenance, and other support functions contribute to the success of this mission. If just one function breaks down, then the overall performance of the organization suffers. Each team member must understand his role but, more importantly, the other team members must feel confident that each cog is pulling its weight toward common objectives. Our first key to success is to encourage teamwork and cooperation among all the unit's organizations with a keen understanding of each other's role.

The next key to success is thorough preparation. Some of the most successful organizations in USAFE have assigned an office of primary responsibility to each of the 14 areas of the nuclear surety inspection. For each area, they also had points of contact from each of the key organizations. Thus,

these organizations conduct fully coordinated—not haphazard—performance exercises. These units practice technical operations and other critical functions such as lightning protection. Their senior leaders also systematically review personnel reliability program records. It is best that the nuclear surety inspection committees meet regularly to discuss any “short poles in the tent” and formalize appropriate courses of action. This method can also bring potential problem areas to the forefront quickly so that leadership can seek solutions early in the process. Many times, leadership can resolve problem areas with additional unit emphasis or funding.

The final key to success is trusting the organization's hard-working people. Each unit has many potential superstars in their ranks and if leadership empowers these people to seek innovative solutions to problems, ingenious answers usually follow. Leaders in the organization should communicate their expectations, point the organization down the right path and allow their people to

press forward. All members must understand the rules of engagement. For nuclear surety inspections the “rules” are in Training Order 11N-25-1, which explains in great detail the Department of Defense's ground rules. This training order is further supplemented by Air Force Instruction 90-201, *Inspector General Activities*, and your major command's supplements. These instructions and supplements describe exactly what the inspector general is evaluating during a nuclear surety inspection. Units should review each of these publications and understand the ground rules for operation. Units succeed in their nuclear surety inspection because they have a good game plan, understand the rules of engagement, encourage teamwork, but, most importantly, empower their teams to perform and execute the game plan. ♦



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During the height of the cold war, Europe, and consequently United States Air Forces in Europe was the center of deterrence. While the perceived likelihood of an all out head-to-head war between NATO and the Warsaw Pact was low, the risks of such an encounter were so high that credible deterrence was essential. To ensure credible deterrence, the United States invested heavily in mission enhancement projects during the 1970s and 1980s. With over half of the funds invested for direct mission enhancement, infrastructure, and quality-of-life improvements lagged behind.

Conditions

This lag was further increased following the internal collapse of the Soviet Union and the associated dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, best symbolized and dated by the fall of the Berlin Wall. Funding for Department of Defense, in general, and USAFE, in particular, dropped significantly in the rush to capitalize on the "peace dividend." During the early 1990s, USAFE was in the middle of a major force drawdown with many unanswered questions as

to the final basing posture for power projection. During this period of drawdown and uncertainty, USAFE was not an attractive place to invest. Facility funding fell drastically, in some cases to zero, even while mission realignments were being completed. Significantly, while many bases were being closed, the missions of the remaining bases were being expanded to accommodate the final force structure, stretching some bases to their limits and beyond. By 1994, with most of the realignment complete and the force structure stabilized, USAFE started rebuilding programs to get out of the temporary, antiquated, and overcrowded facilities.

Program Success

Today, USAFE, with help from the Air Staff, is back in the funding game for facility improvements. Major housing renovations to 40-plus-year-old apartments and homes are underway in Germany and the United Kingdom. Members residing in stairwell apartments in Germany are beginning to see the restart of bath and laundry tower additions. These are significant quality-of-life improvements for large families

who previously had to share a single bathroom or rely on the common use launderette in the basement. Members in the United Kingdom can look forward to renovations and additions as units there are generally 20 to 30 percent below authorized sizes. USAFE has taken a whopping 96 percent of its military family housing operation and maintenance project funds and plowed it into major maintenance and repair efforts while simultaneously re-establishing the zeroed out major renovation and alteration program.

Dormitory residents are seeing significant improvements as well. USAFE has funded upgrades for 671 rooms from central latrine to a one plus one standard in fiscal year 1995 and 1997 which will consist of a private room, shared bath, and kitchenette. Additionally, the command will construct an extra 1,470 new rooms to replace central latrine dormitories in the fiscal year 1997 and 1999 military construction program. The combined facility improvement program will fund upgrades and replacements for all permanent party central latrine dormitory rooms by fiscal year 1999. An additional dormitory for

250 airman at Aviano Air Base, Italy, is receiving tentative support from NATO.

The military construction program has been energized after a seven-year lapse. Most of the military construction funding received from fiscal year 1990 to 1996 was the result of emergency reprogramming. Military construction buys high cost construction or expansion of facilities—over \$300,000 prior to and over \$500,000 after Oct. 1, 1996. Projects are line-item approved by Congress. The Air Staff submits requirements to the Office of the Secretary of Defense and Congress on a scored “worst first” basis. This allocation model benefits USAFE, as our facilities generally lag the rest of the Air Force. However, even with an increasing military construction program, many requirements are still being postponed to the out-years and beyond. USAFE’s realignment squeezed more mission into fewer installations and still requires the construction of additional supporting facilities such as a KC-135 consolidated squadron operations at Mildenhall or expansion of existing facilities and utilities such as a new waste water treatment plant at Aviano Air Base, Italy.

Programs Unique to USAFE

The NATO Security Investment Program is a crucial part of “fixing USAFE.” NATO is supporting significant portions of USAFE’s realignment through the approval of several “capability packages.” Ordinarily, NATO supports only direct mission NATO facilities. However, since the massive build up of Aviano Air Base is a lower cost alternative to the creation of an

entirely new southern region presence at Crotone, Italy, NATO supports more than the basic mission needs for Aviano Air Base. For example, Aviano Air Base will gain a NATO-funded, 250-person dormitory in calendar year 1998. That base alone is expected to benefit from \$157 million in NATO investments from calendar year 1996 to 1999. Altogether, USAFE expects to receive \$465 million in NATO-supported restoration and construction from fiscal year 1996 to 1999.

There are two additional, unique funding sources available to USAFE—payment-in-kind and defense overseas military foreign investment recovery account. Payment-in-kind, which applies only to installations in Germany, is based on the commercial residual value of returned installations. Germany has agreed to provide U.S. forces with 401 million deutsche marks, of which USAFE expects to receive the equivalent of \$40 million over the next five years. This defense account, available to non-U.S. installations, differs from payment-in-kind in that the host nation actually deposits residual value funds into the U.S. Treasury. The defense account, unlike payment-in-kind, can only pay for maintenance, repair, and environmental compliance work—no new construction. USAFE is working with the Air Staff to obtain congressional approval to spend the \$57 million recently received for the return of installations in Italy and the Netherlands.

How We Did It

How has USAFE garnered this support? First, USAFE focused on undeniable requirements. Second,

USAFE received strong involvement from installation commanders to numbered Air Force commanders and the major command commander. In fact, the USAFE commander is our number one advocate for improved facility funding. Third, USAFE used every available funding source, not just the major ones listed here but also defense-level funding sources, for fuels, medical, and schools; nonappropriated sources for commissary requirements, Army Air Force Exchange Service, and morale, welfare and recreation facilities; and supplemental funds for quality-of-life initiatives from Congress and the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Fourth, and perhaps most importantly, USAFE has taken every opportunity to present the need to distinguished visitors and focus people in influential positions on the true hurt. This involves building muscle-and-bone programs, project by project, that provide support to mission accomplishment—be it directly in a squadron operations facility or indirectly by quality-of-life improvements in housing and indirect mission such as consolidated support centers.

Conclusion

USAFE still has many unfunded facility and infrastructure requirements. However, through active commander involvement, the building of solid programs by base and staff personnel and the clear articulation of the need to key individuals, USAFE is on the upswing and is prepared to continue to provide the platform for continued deterrence and intervention through our forward presence. ♦



Institutionalizing Quality in a Medical Setting

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Ensuring that quality becomes an integral part of daily operations requires a structure that encompasses all aspects of organizational management. In searching for a model to institutionalize this process, the 48th Medical Group at Royal Air Force Lakenheath decided to adopt one fashioned on the Juran Trilogy—a registered trademark of Juran Institute, Inc. Creating and implementing this quality structure required the willingness and flexibility of senior medical leadership to combine the efforts of three separate but related offices: total quality management, quality control, and the

self-inspection program.

Our effort at managing for quality began with the planning process. We centered on monitoring and control, with the ultimate desire of creating an environment for continuous improvement.

Planning

The first step towards “operationalizing quality” involved developing a strategic plan aligned with that of our parent organization—the 48th Fighter Wing. Using the Air Force Strategic Planning Model, our executive quality council set forth a written document that revolved around the four keys—

customers, customer requirements, processes, and result areas. After this plan was completed, it addressed all our goals and objectives related to quality of care and financial and general management aspects of the medical group.

Second, realizing that resources are limited, our council developed a team-chartering process to ensure that worth-

are established to evaluate compliance in certain fundamental areas. Quality assurance monitoring looks at those areas specifically related to the delivery of quality medical care. Additionally, following our Lakenheath Instruction 90-501, *Assessment Management Program*, an assessment management program was instituted to look at all the aspects relative to

were formed and information was needed.

The second aspect of improvement relates to how performance improvement projects are initiated and tracked. Whether they are mandated by the quality council, warranted by deviations in the present metrics package, or suggested by staff to improve operations, these teams are monitored. This is to ensure the proper resources are allocated, proper training is supplied when necessary, projects are completed in a timely manner, and ideas are implemented.

The success of this quality effort was put to the test during a recently completed visit by the Joint Commission for the Accreditation of Health Care Organizations. At the completion of that inspection, which awarded the medical group with one of the highest scores possible, the team commented that

“The first step towards ‘operationalizing quality’ involved developing

while performance improvement projects received the emphasis they deserved. Change initiatives are spontaneously encouraged within individual work areas; however, cross-functional teams—those whose efforts will fundamentally change our ways of doing business—are championed by the executive council to ensure correct formation, timely progress, idea implementation, and proper follow-up.

Third, recognizing that this cultural change requires a new emphasis, the executive quality council decided to address changes in the rewards and recognition program. By changing this program, they could reinforce the new behaviors necessary to foster Quality Air Force principles.

Control

Using the philosophy “measure everything that results in customer satisfaction,” or metrics, performance indicators

self inspection and self assessment. From all these measures, selected metrics are packaged for monthly review by the medical group commander.

a strategic plan aligned with that of our parent organization...”

Improvement

Continuous improvement requires emphasis in two directions. Training is essential if all members within the organization are to understand their role in improvement. Training is conducted in two phases. First, fundamental courses are available to all assigned members; for instance, the basic awareness or leaders course. Just-in-time training was supplied as teams

“never have we seen so many multidisciplinary teams with outstanding process improvements.”

The success we have achieved to date with this integrated approach continues. We now look to this model to reduce further process redundancies, enabling us to work more efficiently and effectively. ♦

Enhancing Productivity with Fast Payback Capital Investment

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In today's world of limited resources, we are often expected to increase the amount of goods produced or services provided with what we currently have or to produce to the same standard with less. One means to this end is increased organizational productivity: a ratio of output to input or efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of resource utilization in carrying out a mission.

In response to a need for ever-increasing levels of productivity, the Air Force has established its productivity improvement program. One particular subprogram, productivity enhancement capital investment, is reaping great benefits for the Air Force and the units that participate in it. Productivity enhancement capital investment is an Air Force-level program which funds the purchase of equipment for Air Force units. To be eligible for this program, a proposal must result in tangible savings equal to or greater than its purchase price within a given time frame.

One of the most popular and successful productivity enhancement programs is the fast payback capital investment

program, also known as FASCAP. The Air Force established the program in 1977 to provide funds to purchase productivity enhancing equipment costing less than \$200,000. The payback is designed to recoup tangible savings within two years of the equipment becoming operational. A good example is equipment which automates a time-consuming, labor-intensive task, thereby saving workforce costs. The dollar value of the workforce savings should be enough to cover the investment cost during the prescribed payback period.

Each major command is responsible for its own payback program. For example, United States Air Forces in Europe provides funding on a first-come, first-served basis. If there are multiple proposals, USAFE prioritizes them based on the greatest return on investment.

If you have an idea for an investment that may generate enough savings to pay for itself in two years, you may be ready to submit a proposal. An organization wishing to participate in this program should submit a completed Air Force Form

2288, *Request for Fast Payback Capital Investment Funds*, to their wing manpower and quality office for the base productivity enhancement capital investment manager's review. After reviewing the proposal for completeness and accuracy, the investment manager forwards it to the major command manager, where the proposal receives a final review and, if eligible, is approved for funding.

Once funded, a payback project can be immediately implemented as proposed.

budget. Also, instead of losing manpower authorizations for good, units may use manpower savings to fund other valid requirements within the unit after the required payback period.

Royal Air Force Lakenheath, United Kingdom, has had great success with their payback program. Members from the 48th Civil Engineering Squadron came up with an idea to purchase an asphalt paver rather than continuing to contract out this workload. This productivity enhancement idea

proved. The two-year return on investment is estimated at almost \$3 saved for every \$1 spent, and life cycle savings were almost \$11 for every \$1 spent. The total life cycle savings to the Air Force directly resulting from these purchases will exceed \$5 million.

The payback program is an effective method for funding your productivity enhancement ideas and doing much more with limited defense dollars. If you have a productivity enhancing idea or just have

To be eligible for this program, a proposal must result in tangible savings equal to or greater than its purchase price within a given time frame.

From the time the equipment becomes operational, the unit must track savings and report to their major command every six months until the investment amortizes completely.

There are a number of reasons for this program's popularity. First, the funding does not come from a unit's

is on track to generate savings of over \$2.5 million over the life of the equipment.

During fiscal year 1996, USAFE has done very well overall with their fast payback capital investment program. USAFE units submitted six projects meeting all program criteria, and all six were ap-

questions about the program, contact your base productivity enhancement capital investment manager at the wing manpower and quality office. ♦

Quality Improvements in Vendor Payment Timeliness



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Quality Air Force techniques really do work! Commanders and supervisors just have to correctly identify process weaknesses, empower their people to make process improvements, and continuously evaluate.

The 26th Accounting and Finance Squadron, Ramstein Air Base, Germany, was activated in 1993 to provide centralized civilian payroll processing, vendor payments, and accounting services for United States Air Forces in Europe's main operating bases and many Department of Defense activities in Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa. These functions were formerly performed at base-level but consolidation offered the opportunity for more efficient operations and workforce savings.

Since the activation of the squadron, civilian payroll processing and accounting services provided to customers have been excellent. However, making timely vendor payments has been very challenging. Prior to 1993, when individual bases and Department of Defense agencies made their own vendor payments in Europe, over 95 percent of these bills was paid on time. When bill paying was consolidated with the 26th Accounting and Finance Squadron in 1993, payment timeliness dropped to an all-time low of 69 percent.

While payment timeliness rates improved over the next few years, they still fell far behind the historical standard of 95 percent and were far below what was anticipated.

From 1993 to 1995 many "fixes" were attempted to improve the process, but we never focused on what exactly was wrong with that process. In September 1995, accounting and finance dissected the process to identify what was really wrong. Our suppliers—contracting offices, base financial services offices, and vendors provide us everything needed to make payments—contracts, receiving reports, and invoices. Contract information and receiving reports are electronically interfaced with our accounts payable system, and we receive invoices from vendors through the mail. Accounting and finance found there were many problems associated with the contracting interface, the receipt of hard copy contracts, and the processing of receiving reports at the base financial services offices. Those processes were not under accounting and finance control, and we could not directly change the processes of another organization. However, we found that some of the documents provided to us by our suppliers were being delayed, misplaced, and sometimes lost within our own office. A document flow process action team was formed to review the flow and distribution of documents under our control.

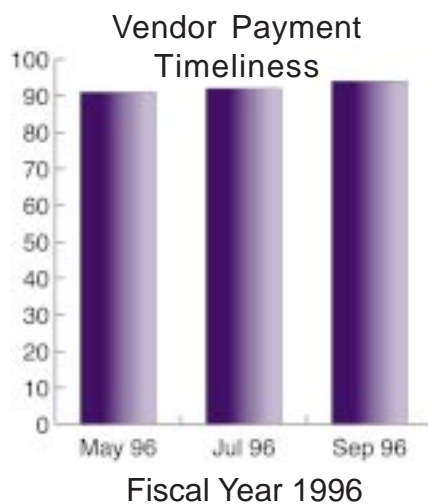
The team identified needed process improvements beginning from the point incoming correspondence and mail were delivered to the squadron through the day payment vouchers were assembled. The first process improvement occurred in the



mail room. There were several daily mail deliveries to the squadron, and the team found it sometimes took up to three days from the time mail was received until it was delivered to the proper payment team. We improved the mail distribution process by training the mail clerks to sort the mail by contract number, thereby ensuring the mail reached the proper payment team. Payment teams were then immediately notified to pick up their mail after sorting. We now distribute to the proper payment team within hours of arrival. Next, the team centralized all of the payment teams' facsimile machines in the mail room. This allowed administrative personnel to review all incoming electronic correspondence and ensure it was promptly delivered to the respective payment team.

The payment teams processed between 8,000 and 10,000 vendor payments a month. The team analyzed the final step in the process, voucher assembly, and preparation. We found that on the average, 20 to 30 percent of all payments were voided during the voucher assembly step because documentation was missing or not in the proper payment file. This meant that between 1,600 and 3,000 vendors were not being paid promptly each month due to missing copies of contracts or invoices. When invoices are received in the office, the payment teams match the invoice with the respective contract and "load" the invoice information into the accounts payable system. The payment teams then forward the documents to the document control branch for filing. A night shift in the document control branch then assembles the payment vouchers. The process broke down when the night shift could not find a document during their duty shift and voided the payment, leaving a note for the respective payment team to locate the document. The document control branch improved the process by developing a retrieval to forecast payments several days prior to the

payment date. They then checked the payment folders and obtained missing documents from the payment teams several days prior to payment. The number of payments voided because of missing or lost documents decreased to only five to ten percent. Subsequently, payment timeliness improved to an all time high during the last half of 1996.



The team greatly improved our document flow and also increased the payment teams' awareness and appreciation of process improvement and Quality Air Force techniques. In October 1996, the payment teams and the document control branch night shift wanted to eliminate lost documents and misplaced payment records during the final phase of payment assembly. Representatives from the payment teams and the document control branch formed a working group to evaluate the previous recommendations and process improvements made by the team.

The working group found that the main reason for lost and misplaced documents was that the payment teams, although responsible for the payment process, did not control the entire

process. The working group recommended eliminating the night shift in the document control branch and filing and assembling all payment documents in the respective payment team sections. This recommendation was implemented in November 1996, disbanding the night shift and reallocating the workforce resources to the payment teams. However, even with the additional workforce, some of the payment teams experienced significant increases in workload. As a solution, the payment teams voluntarily extended their duty day by one hour. The results of this initiative were outstanding. During November and December 1996, no payments were voided because of misplaced or lost documents—a significant first in squadron history.

Quality Air Force techniques really work! Through our experience, we found that commanders and supervisors need to empower the people to make changes. Empowerment is a big motivator and strengthens the trust and confidence between leadership and the organization. Just listen to what Senior Airman Melanie Skeens, accounts payable technician, has to say about the new process—"I love this new process. We now pay closer attention to our daily tasks, correct our mistakes on the spot, and resolve payment problems before the vouchers leave the section. The bottom line is that we do a better job and save time."♦



Environmental Compliance Assessment Management Program in Overseas Locations

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The environmental compliance assessment management program has been an integral part of the United States Air Forces in Europe's environmental management program for over a decade. During this time, the command has been faced with problems unique to operating in an overseas environment as well as challenges common to the entire Air Force. These challenges can best be summarized by reviewing compliance requirements, training, sister service partnerships, and overall program management.

Compliance Requirements

One of the main purposes of the program is to improve Air Force environmental compliance and management worldwide. To do that in USAFE, we have tried to determine the environmental compliance standards with which we should

comply. In the United States, requirements are clearly established in federal, state, and local laws. Overseas, however, such clarity is elusive. The Department of Defense overseas environmental baseline guidance document contains the minimum requirements with which all overseas U.S. agencies must comply. In addition, host nations, local governments, and even the European Union have their own environmental standards. To resolve the dilemma created by such a myriad criteria, the Department of Defense established final governing standards for each country in which the United States has a permanent presence. Since the standards were finalized in 1995, all environmental program checklists have been updated to reflect the new requirements. Thus, we've met the challenge of defining our environmental standards but must keep in mind that they are continually evolving.

Training

Because our environmental standards are tailored to each country, training plays an even more critical role in understanding USAFE compliance requirements. We not only provide needed environmental

training, we provide it in the language of several of our host nations. For example, we have conducted pesticide training in Turkish and asbestos training in German and Italian. This is certainly a challenge unique to an overseas environment.

Sister Service Partnerships

Because of our special relationships, we can work closer with our sister services on overseas environmental compliance programs. Because we share common final governing standards, we are pursuing ways to partner our compliance efforts with our sister services. Air Force members have already taken part in the Navy's version of the program and we are moving toward more interaction with the Army.

Program Management

Three initiatives have helped improve our environmental program management. First, the introduction of new computer software like Microsoft Access® allowed us to more effectively track compliance management programs and associated findings. Second, using a combined team of contractor, USAFE, and Air National Guard members has permitted us to provide the right mix of people to conduct

effective external assessments. Finally, a "shadow" program has been implemented to provide additional hands-on training to base personnel during external assessments to benefit installation programs.

Conclusion

Perhaps the greatest challenge we face today is the continually evolving nature of environmental compliance. New technology, process changes, new laws, and other factors create a constant state of flux. The Chinese have a word for crisis that roughly translates into "dangerous opportunity." While the program is not in crisis, the two meanings accurately represent the dichotomy between the two words. If an ineffective program is in existence, the installation will surely put itself in "danger" by potentially exposing its members to environmental health and safety concerns. On the other hand, a well-run program will provide numerous "opportunities" by identifying ways we can improve our processes. The challenges facing effective environmental program management are clear—we must meet them today to better prepare ourselves for tomorrow. ♦

Special Interest Items

The Air Force Inspection Agency publishes this schedule of special interest items to advise inspectors at all levels of current inspection efforts and to encourage crossfeed of inspection guides and information. The schedule contains ongoing Air Force, major command, and forward operating unit special interest items. Direct questions concerning specific items to the agency monitors listed below.

USAF

Lt. Col. Ohman
DSN 246-1575

96-01

Explosives Safety Program
Management

Expires: March 31, 1997

96-02

Policy and Guidance Review Validation

Expires: July 15, 1997

97-01

Hazardous Materials Management

Expires: Oct. 31, 1997

95-02

Simplified Acquisition of Base Engineer
Requirements

Expires: Oct. 31, 1997

96-01

In-Flight Communications Discipline

Expires: Feb. 28, 1998

96-02

Recruiter Transition Program

Expires: June 30, 1998

96-03

Sexual Harrassment

Expires: Aug. 31, 1998

AFSPC

Master Sgt. Madison
DSN 834-6362

95-02

Weapon Storage Area Security
Enhancements

Expires: Indefinite

95-04

Automated Data Processing Equipment

Accounts and Maintenance

Expires: Oct. 15, 1997

96-01

Normalization of Supply Accounts

Expired: Feb. 28, 1997

ACC

Ms. Brehm
DSN 574-8710

94-01

Joint Oil Analysis Program

Expires: Indefinite

95-02

American Express Program
Management

Expires: Indefinite

95-04

Management of ACC Culture and
Leadership Survey

Expires: Indefinite

AFMC

Maj. Rawlings
DSN 787-7650

96-01

Elite Gate Guard

Expires: April 10, 1998

96-02

Honor Guards

Expires: April 18, 1997

96-03

Champion Wheels Program

Expires: May 1, 1998

96-04

Quality Assurance Evaluator Program

Expires: May 15, 1998

96-05

Report of Survey Program

Expires: June 12, 1998

AMC

Tech. Sgt. Jackson-Hansen
DSN 576-5975

105

Documenting Aerial Port Workload

Expired: Feb. 1, 1997

106

Intelligence Automated Mission Support

Expires: March 31, 1997

107

Ability to Survive and Operate Exercise
Program

Expires: March 31, 1997

108

Enlisted Performance Feedback

Expires: Apr. 30, 1997

109

Passenger Manifesting and Control

Expires: Oct. 21, 1997

AETC

Lt. Col. Oncale
DSN 487-5344

94-01

Automated Data Processing
Equipment Account

Expires: June 30, 1997

95-01

Computer Security

Expires: June 30, 1997

AFSOC

Capt. Zook
DSN 579-2858

96-01

Core Automated Maintenance System

Expired: Dec. 31, 1996

Special Interest Items

PACAF

Chief Master Sgt. Errecart
DSN 449-9316

96-01

Night Cockpit Illumination
Expires: Jan. 14, 1997

96-02

Technical Order Compliance
and Management
Expires: Jan. 31, 1997

96-03

Air Combat Training with Similar Aircraft
Expires: April 30, 1997

96-04

Dress and Appearance
Expires: May 14, 1997

USAF

Capt. Castor
DSN 480-6005

036

Customer Service in Housing
Management
Expires: Indefinite

039

USAF Self Help Program
Expired: Dec. 30, 1996

AFRES

Master Sgt. Harden
DSN 497-1498

015

Appropriate Leave Status for Air Reserve
Technicians When Performing Military Duty
Expires: March 31, 1997

016

Reporting and Documentation—Pilot
Trainee Program
Expires: March 1, 1997

018

Corrosion Prevention and Aircraft Marking
Expires: Oct. 1, 1998

019

Simplified Acquisition of Base
Engineering Requirements
Expires: Dec. 31, 1997

020

Aviation Petroleum Decentralization
Program
Expires: Feb. 28, 1997

021

Fuel Systems Section Management
Expires: May 31, 1999

022

Government Travel Card Program
Management
Expires: March 31, 1997

023

Air Force Reserve Policy on Family Care
Expires: March 1, 2000

024

International Merchant Purchase Authoriza-
tion Card
Expires: Indefinite

025

Standard Base Supply System Micro-
computer Program
Expires: July 31, 1997

026

Training Documents
Expires: July 31, 1997

ANG

Lt. Col. McClain
DSN 225-3624

92-01

Dual Compensation
Expires: Indefinite

93-02

G-Awareness (AETC & PACAF Only)
Expires: Indefinite

94-01

Information Processing Management
System
Expires: Indefinite

96-01

Tactical Deception Program
Expires: Indefinite

CAP-USAF

Chief Master Sgt. Boyle
DSN 493-4286

None

AIA

Capt. Hammontree
DSN 969-2891

96-01

Esprit de Corps
Expires: Indefinite

96-02

Fatality/Suicide Prevention
Expires: May 1, 1997

AFOSI

Special Agent Sowell
DSN 297-4552

94-01

Investigative Sufficiency and
Documentation
Expires: Indefinite

94-02

Effectiveness of the Mission Key
Processes and Management Program
Expires: Indefinite

Fraud in the Air Force

Maj. James G. Pasierb
AFOSI/PA DSN 297-4728



The Air Force Office of Special Investigations investigates all types of fraud cases against the government. Fraud costs the Air Force millions of dollars annually. Most AFOSI fraud investigations are in the procurement area: product substitution/diversion/mis-charging, conflicts of interest, and bribery. Other types of fraud involve military and civilian members who have been caught cheating the Air Force. In these budget-tightening days, the impact of fraud, waste, and abuse is felt throughout the Air Force, and we should all accept the responsibility to prevent it at every opportunity. Mutual command and office of special investigations support, coupled with teamwork, are essential for successful prevention, detection, and neutralization of fraud. Here are some examples.

Default on a U.S. Air Force Contract

Subject: Air Force Contractor

Synopsis: In 1982, the Air Force awarded a contract for

the manufacture of a material handling system to be installed at a large west coast base. After failing several inspections, the contract was terminated for default in 1984. The Air Force requested from the company the return of more than \$660,000 in progress payments and \$131,000 in reprocurement costs. The company appealed and in 1991 the Armed Services Board of Contract Appeals denied the company's appeal. An investigation was reopened to determine the company's assets and in 1996 a civil judgment was entered against the company.

Results: The company was ordered to pay \$791,800 plus interest of \$687,600.

Submitting False Claims

Subject: Air Force Contractor

Synopsis: The vice president of a company submitted false claims on a contract to produce C-5 aircraft engine hoists even though the hoists were never delivered. The vice president signed payment requests, submitted false vouchers, and displayed for inspection rejected parts from a separate

government contract not connected with the hoists.

Results: The vice president pleaded guilty to submitting almost a half million dollars in false claims. In addition to repayment, there could be a \$250,000 fine and five years in prison.

Travel Voucher Fraud

Subject: Air Force Colonel

Synopsis: The office of special investigations received information that a colonel, group commander, had committed travel voucher fraud. The investigation revealed that the colonel repeatedly used official temporary duty assignments to visit his family in a neighboring state. In many cases, it shows the colonel returning on Monday instead of the previous Friday. In one case, the colonel arranged a trip to Hawaii after diverting to pick up his wife and stayed days longer than the duty required.

Results: The colonel was removed from his position, received an article 15, forfeited one month's pay, paid \$900 recoupment, and was allowed to retire. ♦

Summary of Recent Audits

Ms. Terri Buckholtz
AFAA/DOO DSN 426-8012



The Air Force Audit Agency provides professional and independent internal audit service to all levels of Air Force management. The reports summarized here discuss ways to improve the economy, effectiveness, and efficiency of installation-level operations and, therefore, may be useful to you. Air Force officials may request copies of these reports or a listing of recently published reports by contacting Ms. Terri Buckholtz at the number above, E-mailing to reports@af.pentagon.mil, or writing to HQ AFAA/DOO, 1125 Air Force Pentagon, Washington DC 20330-1125.

Communications Tower Management at a United States Air Forces in Europe installation was not effective. Specifically, Air Force management did not account for all antenna fixtures at United Kingdom communication sites or request Ministry of Defense reimbursement for site utility and maintenance costs, estimated at \$400,000 per year. In addition, Air Force personnel

did not request reimbursement from the Ministry of Defense and private vendors for \$52,500 in safety repairs at the Dunkirk tower. In accordance with a memorandum of understanding with the United Kingdom, recurring costs to maintain the sites should be equally shared. (*Report of Audit 51197003*)

Management of Aircraft Egress Time Change Parts at an Air Combat Command installation required improvement. Egress personnel must maintain the reliability of egress systems by replacing parts before the safe life expires. However, a review of 99 aircraft containing egress time change parts disclosed 81 with at least one incorrect replacement date. In addition, the Core Automated Maintenance System did not accurately reflect egress parts data. Proper management of egress parts is critical to aircraft flight safety. Note: Personnel immediately corrected all identified incorrect replacement dates. (*Report of Audit 25097005*)

The Life Support Program at an Air Mobility Command installation required improvement. Equipment custodians did not always maintain authorized equipment levels, resulting in excess equipment valued at \$731,008 on hand or on order. In addition, life support personnel did not maintain accurate in-use quantities data or item use codes on the Custodian Authorization/Custody Receipt Listing. Further, life support personnel did not maintain an environmentally controlled oxygen room or store equipment in a controlled and locked area. Life support personnel must ensure that aircrews and passengers are provided safe and reliable life support equipment. (*Report of Audit 24697003*) ♦

Air Logistics Center Improves **PARTS** **SCREENING PROCESS**



Photo courtesy of AFMC/PA. A scientist with the F-15E oxygen generating system.

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Air logistics centers strive to reduce the cost of materiel.

They do this by using competitive procurement methods or by purchasing parts from the actual manufacturer and avoiding the middleman markups. Their efforts include a source qualification and approval process. This process ensures that new suppliers are capable of providing parts that maintain the integrity of the equipment where installed.

The process begins when an air logistic center receives the manufacturing drawings. With the volume of parts managed by a center, it is difficult to thoroughly review the data upon receipt. Therefore, most air logistics centers only sample the data upon receipt for legibility, drafting standards, and completeness. They usually do not review the data for ad-

equacy for reprocurement until the initial reprocurement spares buy. If the data is found to be inadequate to support competitive reprocurement, the center will usually have to buy from the original source. They may also attempt to buy the needed data for subsequent buys.

On his initiative, Mr. Derwin Laster of the competition advocate's office at Warner-Robins Air Logistics Center proposed a better way to do business. He found that the center was using a lot of workforce resources in screening parts. This includes verifying the part number and identifying any special tooling requirements, determining potential sources, and continuing attempts to obtain missing data. With the number of items managed by our air logistics centers, screening consumes a large number of

work-hours. Laster determined that for some types of parts, it would be more efficient to divert these resources to reviewing the reprocurement data upon receipt at Warner-Robins.

Laster's efforts resulted in the Warner-Robins Air Logistic Center's deputy commander issuing a letter, *New Policy for Acquisition Method Code Processing*, dated July 25, 1995, that modified existing policy. The letter deleted the requirement for screening certain stock classes when an item purchase quantity was 10 or fewer. A review of screening actions over the previous four-year period revealed only three new sources had been successfully qualified on these low quantity acquisitions. The letter further stated that the time saved be directed to accomplishing a 100-percent review

of new data before Department of Defense Form 250, *Material Inspection and Receiving Report*, acceptance at Warner-Robins Air Logistic Center.

Focusing the center's work force in this manner should lead to greater efficiencies in the acquisition screening process. The center will know when data is not complete and will be better at enforcing data delivery according to contract terms. The necessary data will then be there in the future for competitive purchase on first-time buys. This should reduce delays and reduce unnecessary noncompetitive, first-time buys.

All members supporting the Air Force mission should be vigilant for more efficient ways to accomplish our mission. Mr. Laster's efforts is an example of just one of the many ways the Air Force is doing just that. ♦

Nonappropriated Fund Financial Oversight

A Valuable Asset for the Commander

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On Oct. 1, 1991, the Air Force strengthened the financial oversight of morale, welfare, and recreation activities by realigning the functions and responsibilities outside of the services community. At the direction of the secretary of the Air Force, the financial management and comptroller organization Air Force wide oversees financial management of nonappropriated funds. The change was designed to enhance the third-party oversight role of nonappropriated fund financial management with ultimate responsibility for operations and funds custodianship remaining with the services organization. At base

level, the services area is responsible for the business management of the activities while the comptroller maintains the responsibility for financial analysis, policy, and oversight of nonappropriated fund programs.

Although many comptrollers have fully embraced their new oversight role, some problems still hinder the overall effectiveness of nonappropriated fund financial oversight throughout the Air Force. For example, some comptrollers are not providing correct financial information to senior leadership for decision-making. It is of utmost importance that the nonappropriated fund financial

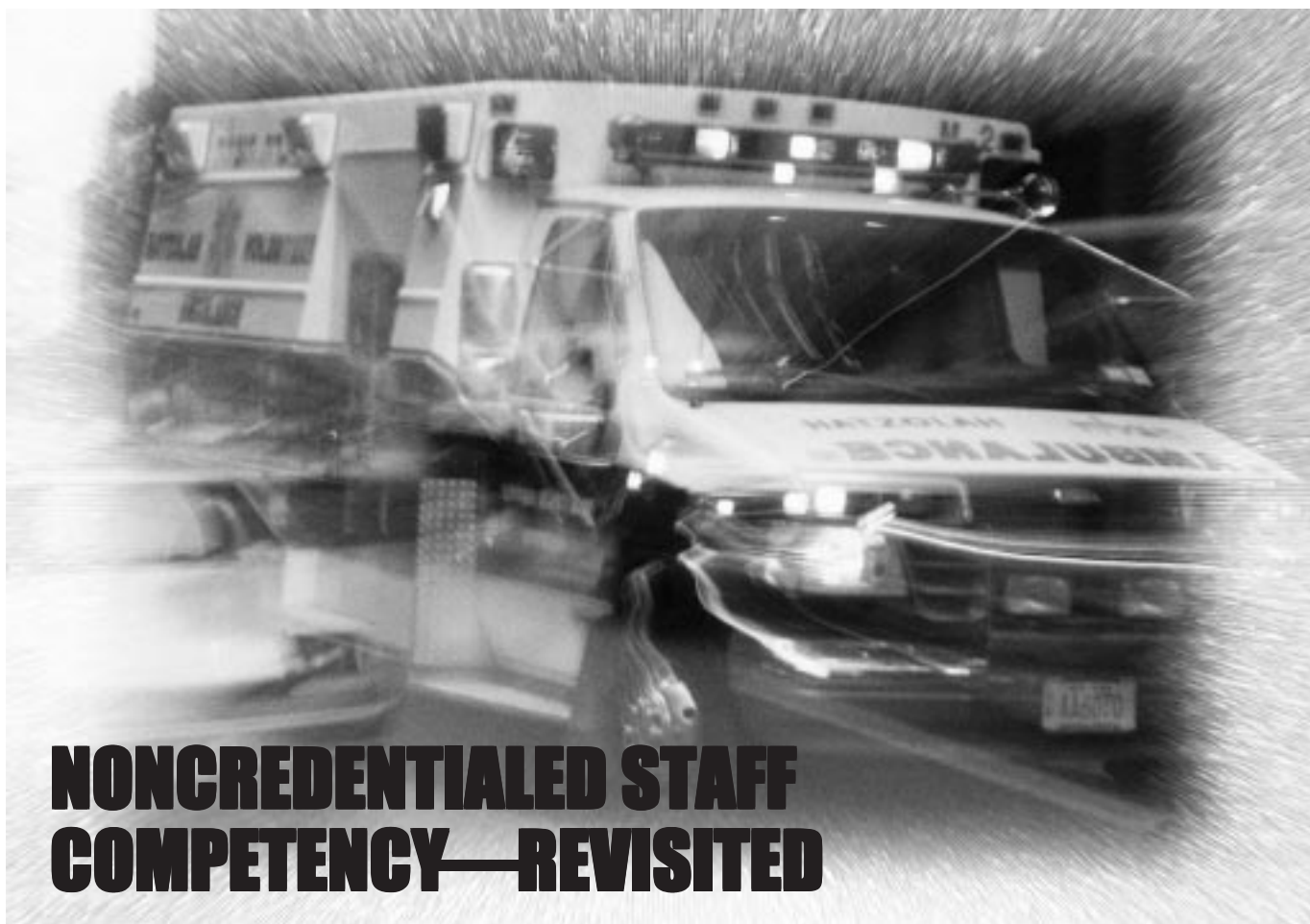
analyst assigned to the comptroller and service's resource management flight chief work hand-in-hand to ensure successful nonappropriated funds oversight. The information provided to base leadership must be accurate, on time, and correctly analyzed to ensure the best business decision is made to enhance customer service and profitability while precluding improprieties in appropriated fund and nonappropriated fund acquisitions. The nonappropriated fund financial analyst is the key to sound financial oversight. This individual, in addition to working closely with the resource management flight chief, must also develop a sound working relationship with nonappropriated funds activity managers to develop in-depth trend analysis and accurate financial analyses. The comptroller's and nonappropriated fund financial analyst's footprints should be apparent on all financial issues. These individuals should attend

monthly financial updates as well as nonappropriated fund council meetings to advise the commander. Comptrollers must realize that the oversight role is not an additional duty but rather a full-time comptroller responsibility. Their involvement is critical to preclude improprieties in the nonappropriated funds arena and protect valuable programs offered by the services organization.

Only one person within the comptroller is usually assigned to accomplish the nonappropriated fund financial analyst duties outlined in Air Force Instruction 65-107, *Nonappropriated Funds Financial Oversight Responsibilities*; however, the estimated work force requirements equate to more than one person but fewer than two. Most locations placed the nonappropriated fund financial analyst position within the financial analysis section. This appears to work well because the other financial analysts are available to assist the

nonappropriated fund financial analyst with some of the requirements identified in Air Force Instruction 65-107. This arrangement especially works well when the nonappropriated fund financial analyst is assisted by the budget analyst who is responsible for the services squadron's appropriated funds budget. This gives the nonappropriated fund financial analyst a well-rounded knowledge of both the nonappropriated funds and appropriated funds budgets and helps eliminate duplication.

Financial oversight is effective. It helps eliminate unauthorized use of appropriated funds and nonappropriated funds resources and also protects taxpayer dollars. However, most importantly it allows effective use of nonappropriated fund dollars to provide well-rounded morale, welfare, and recreation programs. ♦



NONCREDENTIALLED STAFF COMPETENCY—REVISITED

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Initiation of a well-conceived, noncredentialed staff competency program does not have to be an antagonistic, gut-wrenching experience. The requirements for noncredentialed staff competency have not gone away—if anything, there is increased emphasis to ensure our people are adequately oriented and trained and recurring training is accomplished and documented. This article will address a couple of reasons why medical units still experience difficulty in getting a competency program off the ground and will propose a few strategies to establish and maintain a solid noncredentialed staff competency program.

There are two stumbling blocks to obtaining buy-in for a successful noncredentialed staff competency program. They are:

1 Unfamiliarity with the concept of noncredentialed staff competency. It's difficult to get where you want to go if you do not know where you are. A good starting point to develop baseline competency education can be gained by:

- reading the September-October 1995 *TIG Brief* article on organization-wide competency assessment,

- reviewing the criteria and the Air Force and Joint Commission references in the August 1996 Health Services

Inspection guide for the HRU.1 division and HRU elements 5.1.1-5.2.3, or

■ reading the Management of Human Resources section in the 1996 Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Hospitals.

2 What you are about to read may ruffle a few feathers but it is the truth based on interviews and observations from this past year. Generally, the office responsible for instituting noncredentialed staff competency is the staff development office, also referred to as the unit education or unit training office. The office symbol is usually “SGNT” or some other abbreviation with “N” in the title. It may be difficult to get buy-in if the medical unit perceives the noncredentialed staff competency program is a nursing initiative. It’s not. More favorably received office symbols for the staff development office are SGOT and SGT.

There are four strategies that one can employ to maintain a solid noncredentialed staff competency program. They are:

1 Establish an education and training council. This depends on the size of the medical unit but you should have representatives from each squadron as a minimum. Primary and alternate

members should be assigned in writing. The council should not be so large as to make decision making too cumbersome. Initially, the council should meet frequently to establish a charter, decide baseline status of medical unit noncredentialed staff competency, and plan a strategy for the medical unit’s approach to standardize noncredentialed staff competency. The meeting minutes should be kept to track progress and identify potential problem areas.

2 Develop organization-wide squadron or flight guidelines to define the mechanisms for determining competence and qualifications for all noncredentialed staff members. The education and training council is probably the most logical source to draft these guidelines since the participating members should be intimately familiar with the orientation, training, and certification requirements of their particular duty sections.

3 Communicate. To obtain buy-in, members at all levels of the organization must be informed of the intent and progress of the noncredentialed staff competency program.

4 Network. Why reinvent the wheel? Call other facilities that have been mentioned as “best practices” in the *Medical*

Inspector General Crosstalk newsletter. If you want to go on-line, you can find these “best practices” at the Air Force Inspection Agency’s homepage, <http://www-afia.saia.af.mil>, and navigate to the medical inspection directorate section. Networking can save numerous hours and also identifies pitfalls that other education and training councils experienced.

You are not being asked to create a new program from scratch. Many of the individual elements needed for a superb noncredentialed staff program currently exist in your facility. A strong foundational knowledge of the noncredentialed staff competency process is essential to include all the required elements and solicit buy-in from the entire staff. Do not expect miracles overnight. A good competency program takes months to develop; it is a collaborative effort from all sections within the medical unit. A process of this magnitude challenges us to use quality tools and processes to the maximum extent. The best advice is to select participants who will actively support education and training endeavors, approach the competency process logically, and develop sound guidelines. ♦

don't forget your Survey

It's your chance to be heard. Take a few minutes to complete a survey. You can find it in the January-February 1997 issue or visit us on-line at **www-afia.saia.af.mil** and complete it there. Responses can be mailed to the return address on the survey or faxed to DSN 246-1711 or commercial (505) 846-1711. It's simple, it's easy, it will make a difference.